

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

81ST MEETING

ANTIGUA (GUATEMALA)
27 SEPTEMBER – 1 OCTOBER 2010

PROPOSAL B-2

SUBMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

RESOLUTION ON SCIENTIFIC OBSERVERS FOR LONGLINE VESSELS

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The objective of the scientific observer program is to improve the collection of scientific data regarding tuna and tuna-like species in the IATTC Area. All large scale longliners vessels of each CPC - of 24 meters overall length and over - are required as of 1st January 2011 to carry at least one observer 5% of the times while fishing in the IATTC Area.

This Resolution is intended to promote an increased knowledge of the EPO area ecosystem so to contribute to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources of highly migratory stocks, in the IATTC Area.

The scarcity of biological data is one of the main difficulties in the work of the IATTC Scientific Committee. In fact, an improvement of the data collection, of all species, would contribute to a better management of tuna and tuna-like species in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

CPCs are responsible to obtain independent and impartial scientific observers. The scientific observer records fishing activities and reports the catch data, focusing on those scientific related. The scientific observer provides a report to the Secretariat within 30 days following the completion of the assignment.

The Resolution does not prescribe the financing modalities of the program which would therefore be left for independent decision to each CPC.

RESOLUTION ON SCIENTIFIC OBSERVERS FOR LONGLINE VESSELS

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC):

Noting the need to ensure uniform and equitable treatment of all tuna-fishing vessels operating in the Convention Area;

Recognising the need to collect comprehensive data on interactions with non-target species, in particular, sea turtles, sharks and seabirds;

Noting that large purse-seine vessels operating in the Convention Area are required to carry scientific observers aboard, in accordance with the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program;

Resolves as follows:

1. Each member and cooperating non-member shall ensure that, from 1 January 2011, at least 5% of the fishing trips made by their longline tuna-fishing vessels greater than 24 metres length overall carry an scientific observer.
2. Each member and cooperating non-member shall provide the Director, by 1 February 2011, with the provisional list of its vessels that will carry scientific observers.
3. The main task of the scientific observers shall be to record catch levels of tuna species, species composition, as well as any interactions with non-target species, in particular sea turtles, seabirds and sharks.
4. The Scientific Advisory Committee shall draw up a common reporting format detailing the required data to be collected by scientific observers.
5. Scientific observers shall submit to their Flag State authorities a report on these observations at the latest 30 days after the end of the respective fishing trip.
6. Members and cooperating non-members shall submit on an annual basis to the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee, by 31 March, the scientific observer's information on the previous year's fishery.
7. At its annual meeting in 2013, the Commission shall review the level of coverage established in accordance with paragraph 1, with a view to increasing it.